

Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Questions from Senate Resources Committee on HB 137
March 28, 2016

1) How will the department use the increased revenue generated from HB 137?

Please see the attached document entitled "HB137 Proposed Use for Increased Revenue".

2) What is the impact of the changes in the age requirements for licensing?

Raising the minimum age for purchasing a license from 16 to 18 results in an estimated loss of revenue of approximately \$70,000 per year from approximately 2,400 fishing licenses and 1,000 hunting licenses.

Raising the age for a Permanent ID (PID) card from 60 to 62 results in estimated increased revenue of \$105,800. An additional \$158,700 would be generated by raising it from 62 to 65. These estimates are based on 3,000 PIDs issued to individuals aged 60-61, and 15,000 PIDs issued to individuals aged 60-64.

3) There were several questions related to the Sockeye stamp: Are fish wheels included? Does it apply to subsistence? How would it be implemented with multiple households represented on a boat?

It is our understanding that in Version "U" of the bill, the sockeye stamp applies to the sport fishery only and not personal use or subsistence fisheries.

4) What is the status of the hatchery bonds?

The state debt manager in the Department of Revenue has advised the department that if future revenue stays in line with the current year, the final payment will be made into a defeasance escrow in late 2021 or early 2022. The original debt schedule projected a payoff date in 2026, but there have been several early redemptions due to available revenue from the hatchery surcharge. The surcharge generates approximately \$6.3 million annually with residents paying ~\$1.4 million and non-residents paying ~\$4.9 million.

5) How do Alaska's fees compare to other western states?

Please see the attached document entitled "Western States Comp of Hunting License and Tag Fees".

Also, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has a comparison of all 50 states that provides total licenses sold and total revenue for the previous 12 years. It can be found at the following links. The comparison for 2015 (only) is attached.

<http://wsfrprograms.fws.gov/Subpages/LicenseInfo/HuntingLicCertHistory20042015.pdf>

<http://wsfrprograms.fws.gov/Subpages/LicenseInfo/FishingLicCertHistory20042015.pdf>

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HB 137 proposes to raise fishing and hunting license fees. The increased revenue from CSHB137(FIN) am that passed the House is approximately \$8.6 million for FY 2018 with \$3.8 million estimated from fishing licenses and \$4.8 million from hunting licenses. An increase in Fish and Game Fund (F&GF) revenue will provide several benefits including providing predictable and reliable funding sources for core management activities, providing match for the currently abundant federal funds, and helping offset current and future reductions in general funds (GF).

Division of Wildlife Conservation

Intensive Management (IM)

IM programs that manage predators or enhance habitat are a core element of game management. Funding for IM programs over the last decade has consisted of capital appropriations. With declining GF, these capital appropriations will be more difficult to obtain and funding will be uncertain. Careful planning and reliable funding are essential to ensure these programs are effective and defensible.

An IM charge of \$10 for residents (103,400 licenses in 2015) and \$30 for non-residents (16,700 licenses in 2015) would generate \$1,535,000.

Filling Game Management Survey and Inventory (S&I) and Research Gaps

Increased license and tag fee revenue will be used to fill several gaps in basic management related information needs such as population estimates for moose, deer, wolves, bears, and caribou.

Many areas of the state have never been surveyed or employ sub-standard trend counts and indices of population performance. This inevitably results in overly-conservative harvest opportunity at the same time that demands for food and all uses increases.

In addition, basic research on the enhancement of certain species and populations is notably lacking. For example, musk-oxen are in high demand for a wide variety of uses from food to viewing, yet we know very little about restoring musk ox populations or how to subsequently manage them for enhanced harvest.

Two of the 5 wildlife regions have never had any significant research programs and subsequently have had to rely on information gathered elsewhere in the state. Increased F&GF with corresponding federal match will go a long way towards meeting these information needs.

Erosion of State’s Right to Manage

The relentless erosion of Alaska’s right to manage our game populations has reached new levels with federal rules and challenges making the area that the state can manage wildlife for the benefit of the people smaller and smaller.

Increased F&GF revenue will help provide support for the Department of Law, ANILCA and Access Defense Program and other efforts to stem the tide of federal over-reach. Because of the enormous amount of federal land in Alaska, there is no question that these efforts directly benefit the users who buy hunting/trapping licenses.

Advisory Committee (AC) and Board-based Regulatory Process

Alaska enjoys an open, public driven regulatory process to regulate the state’s fish and wildlife resources. The foundation of this process consists of more than 80 citizen Local Advisory Committees many of which are located in rural Alaska. As fishery and wildlife management becomes increasingly complex, advisory committee functions need to increase rather than wane with the availability of GF. Increases in F&GF revenues will help ensure that ACs can meet frequently to effectively participate in the board regulatory process.

Future GF Reductions

General funds for the division have been reduced from \$7.5 million in FY 2015 to \$4.4 million in the Governor’s FY 2017 amended budget, with future reductions likely. Increased F&GF revenue will help offset reductions in core services resulting from these GF reductions.

Take Advantage of Abundant Federal Funds

Unprecedented amounts of Pittman Robertson (PR) Funds are currently available due to increases in firearm and ammunition sales nationally, but they require a 3:1 match. Increases in license revenue can be used as match to take advantage of these funds for core services as well as one-time projects that benefit hunters and trappers, such as hunter access projects.

Division of Sport Fish

In the Division of Sport Fish, an increase in F&GF revenue will have several benefits including providing predictable and reliable funding sources for core management activities, helping offset current and future reductions in GF, and supplanting expiring capital appropriations and third party funded projects.

Stock Assessment

Chinook – The Chinook Salmon Research Initiative (CSRI; two capital appropriations totaling \$15 million), and Mat-Su fisheries capital appropriations (3 appropriations totaling \$7 million) will be fully expended in the next 1-2 years. CSRI funds, used to fund adult and juvenile salmon work on 12 indicator stocks across the state will be largely expended after the 2016 field season. Mat-Su capital appropriations that fund such projects as Susitna River drainage-wide Chinook salmon escapement estimates will also largely be expended after the 2016 field season. Increased F&GF revenue could be used to continue high priority Chinook salmon projects beyond the life of those CIP appropriations.

Groundfish – New and emerging needs for better information in Southeast Alaska, Northern Gulf Coast, Prince William Sound and Kodiak for species including rockfish – non pelagic and pelagic - and lingcod.

Resident Species – With few exceptions, the division is conducting little to no monitoring of the stock status of resident species. Past funding reductions eliminated many of the projects previously implemented. Most recently, Southeast trout and resident species projects in SE were eliminated in FY 2016. Increased F&GF revenue could be used to implement high priority trout projects statewide, and, in the Interior, Arctic grayling, northern pike, and burbot stock assessment.

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Enhancement

CIP funds have enabled increased annual Chinook salmon stocking levels from 150,000 to 200,000 smolt at Deception Creek, and from 150,000 to 400,000 smolt at Eklutna tailrace, beginning in 2014. Those funds will expire after several years.

FY2016 reductions resulted in the elimination of the Arctic Grayling stocking program (approx. 74,000 grayling), and reduction in rainbow trout stocking levels at Southcentral and Interior locations. Additional F&GF revenue could be used to re-implement and/or increase stocking for those species to or beyond pre-FY 2016 levels.

Additional F&GF revenue would also enable stocked waters assessment to take place so that we can assess and weigh the benefits associated with stocking specific locations and species and how well stocking activities provide increased fishing opportunities; past reductions to the division’s base funds resulted in the elimination of stocked waters assessment. Additional funds would provide the ability to assess the benefits and success of our current program. It will also improve the division’s ability to ensure the greatest benefit to anglers based on where fish are stocked, the frequency of stocking, and how many fish of certain species are stocked.

Invasive Species & Habitat

Northern pike eradication, culvert assessment and replacement, instream flow protection, and stream bank restoration projects could also be funded by increased F&GF revenue.

Future GF Reductions

General funds for the division have been reduced from \$7 million in FY 2015 to \$4.2 million in the Governor’s FY 2017 amended budget, with future reductions likely. Increased F&GF revenue will help offset reductions in core services resulting from these GF reductions.

Chitina Dipnet Permit Fees and Kenai/Kasilof Sockeye Stamp

The department has historically issued 10,000-12,000 Chitina Dipnet permits. Assuming the same level of issuance, a fee of \$15 would generate \$150,000-\$180,000 annually for trash removal, vaulted latrine maintenance, and road and trail maintenance. The department would pursue contracts with DNR and DOT for these services.

The division estimates an annual total of 125,000 and 15,000 anglers respectively fish the Kenai and Kasilof River systems. It is unknown how many of these individuals target sockeye salmon. Additionally, the division issues approximately 35,000 Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon permits annually, the vast majority of which are fished in the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers. It is likely that many individuals participate in both the sport and personal use fisheries, although the current version of the bill only includes sport fishing and not personal use fishing. A sockeye stamp fee could generate revenue for management, trash removal, toilets and facilities, and access. The department would pursue contracts with DNR, DOT, local governments and other agencies for these services.

Hunting License and Tag Fees in Selected Western States, 2016

	ALASKA			IDAHO		MONTANA		WASHINGTON		WYOMING	UTAH	COLORADO		NEVADA	
	Resident	Non-resident	NR Alien	Resident	Non-resident	Resident	Non-resident	Resident	Non-resident	Resident	Non-resident	Resident	Non-resident	Resident	Non-resident
Hunting License	\$25	\$85	\$300	\$13	\$155 (g)	\$18 (e)	\$25 (e)	x	x	\$13	\$34	\$10 (d)	\$10 (d)	\$33	\$142
Tag Fee															
Black Bear	\$0	\$225 (b)	\$300	\$12	\$201 (h)	\$19	\$350	\$24	\$222	\$45	\$362	\$30 (i)	\$135 (i)	\$44	\$354
Brown Bear	\$25	\$505 (a)	\$655 (b)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Deer	\$0	\$150	\$200	\$20	\$317 (h)	\$16	\$597 (f)	\$45	\$434	\$43	\$326 (h)	\$30 (i)	\$93 (i)	\$34	\$379
Elk	\$5	\$305 (a)	\$405 (a)	\$31	\$432 (h)	\$20	\$851 (f)	\$50	\$497	\$57	\$591 (h)	\$50 (i)	\$218 (i)	\$49	\$629
Goat	\$5	\$305 (a)	\$405 (a)	\$167	\$2117 (h)	\$125	\$1250	\$332	\$1652	\$127	\$2166 (h)	\$413	\$1518	\$254	\$2084
Moose	\$5	\$405 (a)	\$505 (a)	\$167	\$2117 (h)	\$125	\$1250	\$332	\$1652	\$117	\$1416 (h)	\$213 (i)	\$713 (i)	\$254	\$2084
Sheep	\$5	\$430 (b)	\$555 (a)	\$167	\$2117 (h)	\$125	\$1250	\$332	\$1652	\$122	\$2266 (h)	\$513	\$1518	\$254	\$2084
Musk Ox Bull	\$505	\$1105 (a)	\$1505 (a)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Bison	\$10	\$455 (a)	\$655 (a)	x	x	\$125	\$1250	x	x	\$413	\$2522	\$413 (i)	\$1518 (i)	x	x
Caribou	\$5	\$330 (a)	\$430 (a)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Antelope	x	x	x	\$31	\$327 (h)	\$19	\$205	x	x	\$38 (a)	\$286	\$30 (i)	\$93 (i)	\$34	\$379
Mtn Lion	x	x	x	\$12	\$201 (h)	\$19	\$320	\$24	\$222	\$30	\$362	\$30 (i)	\$135 (i)	x	x
Turkey	x	x	x	\$20	\$103 (h)	\$14	\$168	\$16	\$45	\$16	\$72	\$35	\$100	\$21	\$101

Notes: This table presents fees for general hunting licenses (conservation / habitat stamp / permit / etc) and game tags / permits only (youth, elderly, veterans, disabled persons, lifetime, or combined hunting/fishing licenses are not included). In some locations or in specific circumstances, fees are charged for applying for a permit or for a drawing to hunt. The costs presented here include any application, drawing or special permit fees. An "x" indicates that there is no hunting for the species in the state.

(a) This includes possible fees for application, drawing, or special permits.

(b) Nonresident U.S. citizen who hunts brown/grizzly bear, Dall sheep or mountain goat must hire a licensed guide/outfitter or be accompanied by a relative who is an AK resident.

(c) Nonresident hunters who are not U.S. citizens must hire a licensed guide/outfitter to hunt any big game animal.

(d) This is for the required \$10 habitat stamp.

(e) Montana requires res/nonres hunters to buy a \$8/\$10 conservation license and a \$10/\$15 base hunting license.

(f) Montana nonresident deer combo (\$597) includes a Conservation, Base Hunting, State Lands and General Deer license and authorizes fishing and hunting of upland game birds, excluding turkey.

Same for nonresident elk combo (\$851).

(g) Idaho offers a special 2-day nonresident hunting license for \$57. Utah offers a 3-day nonresident hunting license for \$32.

(h) Includes application fees. Entire tag amount plus nonrefundable application fee (\$14.75 in ID; \$14 in WY; \$25/\$26.50 for res/nonres in NV) must be submitted at time of application.

(i) Figures here are lowest possible; costs vary depending on type of hunt. Resident black bear: \$30-\$166; nonresident bear: \$135-\$475; resident deer: \$30-\$168; nonresident deer: \$93-\$568; resident elk: \$50-\$513; nonresident elk: \$218-\$1505; resident moose \$213-\$413; nonresident moose \$713-\$1518; resident bison: \$413-\$1110; nonresident bison: \$1518-\$2615; resident pronghorn: \$30-\$55; nonresident pronghorn: \$93-\$293; resident cougar: \$30-\$58; nonresident cougar: \$135-\$475.

Calculation Year 2015

State	Paid License Holders*	Resident Licenses, Tags, Permits and Stamps	Non-Resident Licenses, Tags, Permits and Stamps	Total License, Tags, Permits & Stamps**	Gross Cost
AK	107,131	271,067	39,577	310,644	\$7,882,213.00
AL	507,926	563,503	36,373	599,876	\$11,519,641.00
AR	326,779	380,399	118,520	498,919	\$15,437,054.50
AZ	200,092	386,069	36,067	422,136	\$16,347,748.00
CA	283,539	830,070	17,278	847,348	\$23,732,811.00
CO	281,201	425,043	105,693	530,736	\$53,153,936.93
CT	42,535	124,281	4,385	128,666	\$2,570,771.00
DE	16,786	50,036	7,024	57,060	\$1,094,480.00
FL	175,349	364,629	15,769	380,398	\$6,528,841.00
GA	395,219	913,539	144,964	1,058,503	\$12,140,229.00
GU	481	481	0	481	\$7,215.00
HI	10,537	10,951	535	11,486	\$150,845.00
IA	219,798	766,883	74,910	841,793	\$20,948,972.00
ID	258,547	918,388	111,428	1,029,816	\$20,668,729.00
IL	320,765	1,310,395	130,598	1,440,993	\$34,226,265.00
IN	278,322	402,951	20,367	423,318	\$11,580,658.00
KS	239,335	359,445	134,220	493,665	\$19,519,927.00
KY	340,902	504,097	90,292	594,389	\$16,219,035.00
LA	370,528	611,406	47,759	659,165	\$9,830,975.00
MA	56,797	233,037	13,472	246,509	\$2,307,232.00
MD	124,187	282,522	56,797	339,319	\$6,127,070.00
ME	165,781	219,149	34,328	253,477	\$7,844,318.00
MI	763,618	1,860,075	36,852	1,896,927	\$27,905,983.00
MN	592,125	1,530,603	40,997	1,571,600	\$28,861,618.00
MO	496,583	1,757,411	73,672	1,831,083	\$20,745,168.00
MP	192	192	0	192	\$2,065.00
MS	218,161	362,467	55,575	418,042	\$5,519,969.00
MT	229,317	828,067	137,756	965,823	\$30,408,857.00
NC	545,032	322,552	24,900	347,452	\$8,363,093.00
ND	148,793	394,044	155,865	549,909	\$9,442,944.00
NE	175,591	343,022	76,928	419,950	\$12,803,379.00
NH	59,068	182,143	29,903	212,046	\$3,838,149.00
NJ	74,067	275,473	78,179	353,652	\$7,572,966.00
NM	97,103	218,338	84,166	302,504	\$15,575,117.00
NV	65,606	118,502	25,387	143,889	\$6,735,261.00
NY	535,915	1,073,132	41,772	1,114,904	\$27,042,363.00
OH	404,997	1,047,714	103,801	1,151,515	\$23,846,473.00
OK	419,445	294,230	17,546	311,776	\$9,096,601.00
OR	264,102	1,243,257	48,173	1,291,430	\$25,566,159.00
PA	969,633	2,538,755	104,188	2,642,943	\$36,676,090.00
PR	5,609	10,195	16	10,211	\$147,463.00
RI	8,624	29,516	4,356	33,872	\$500,979.00
SC	206,397	363,765	59,672	423,437	\$7,961,337.00
SD	244,182	264,338	138,034	402,372	\$20,799,163.00
TN	727,229	717,304	40,055	757,359	\$17,392,725.00
TX	1,060,455	1,467,901	69,530	1,537,431	\$41,125,300.00
UT	207,331	334,205	33,322	367,527	\$13,876,849.00
VA	276,660	786,778	43,414	830,192	\$26,079,622.00
VI	4	4	0	4	\$40.00
VT	72,930	165,923	17,857	183,780	\$3,860,543.00
WA	180,829	667,044	8,981	676,025	\$16,457,582.00
WI	717,381	2,817,491	150,850	2,968,341	\$37,705,555.00
WV	220,811	565,393	138,662	704,055	\$9,435,005.00
WY	133,568	173,676	88,315	261,991	\$25,838,470.00
Total:	14,843,895	32,681,851	3,169,080	35,850,931	\$821,021,854.43

Calculation Year 2015

State	Paid License Holders*	Resident Licenses, Tags, Permits and Stamps	Non-Resident Licenses, Tags, Permits and Stamps	Total License, Tags, Permits & Stamps**	Gross Cost
AK	410,686	244,414	334,705	579,119	\$17,454,521.00
AL	640,963	577,053	113,749	690,802	\$9,542,268.00
AR	514,946	485,182	197,563	682,745	\$7,717,746.50
AZ	374,686	445,893	75,066	520,959	\$10,231,977.00
CA	1,651,053	2,464,698	187,379	2,652,077	\$64,894,123.00
CO	664,051	724,738	335,470	1,060,208	\$15,133,165.90
CT	157,817	197,026	13,983	211,009	\$4,235,898.00
DC	8,756	2,614	6,142	8,756	\$94,568.00
DE	84,955	55,156	43,823	98,979	\$1,541,516.00
FL	1,373,554	1,586,267	553,853	2,140,120	\$35,058,136.00
GA	645,772	708,969	102,906	811,875	\$9,056,610.00
HI	3,999	3,904	498	4,402	\$22,346.00
IA	370,160	368,639	44,389	413,028	\$8,049,092.00
ID	444,520	419,319	155,180	574,499	\$10,812,382.00
IL	705,308	769,352	36,243	805,595	\$9,381,255.00
IN	464,948	412,483	59,357	471,840	\$7,701,552.00
KS	272,672	258,960	5,015	263,975	\$4,927,926.00
KY	574,505	528,124	88,211	616,335	\$9,881,887.00
LA	723,815	840,444	238,824	1,079,268	\$10,406,661.00
MA	164,968	332,191	24,092	356,283	\$4,415,981.00
MD	321,913	451,828	127,201	579,029	\$8,316,430.00
ME	262,766	186,486	78,309	264,795	\$7,620,621.00
MI	1,127,726	1,009,584	193,192	1,202,776	\$22,164,738.00
MN	1,487,547	1,313,603	335,485	1,649,088	\$27,514,149.00
MO	815,596	1,154,836	150,083	1,304,919	\$13,076,434.00
MP	200	200	0	200	\$2,133.00
MS	343,492	256,781	91,359	348,140	\$11,779,470.00
MT	399,282	425,103	353,532	778,635	\$11,844,546.00
NC	1,224,710	744,426	227,193	971,619	\$16,723,098.00
ND	210,941	162,042	59,982	222,024	\$2,810,239.00
NE	223,036	355,380	67,375	422,755	\$5,697,996.00
NH	155,174	219,931	91,283	311,214	\$5,282,634.00
NJ	177,334	251,557	21,580	273,137	\$5,111,837.00
NM	205,494	158,802	309,131	467,933	\$5,527,215.00
NV	118,557	207,921	24,767	232,688	\$3,565,026.00
NY	922,604	1,074,642	174,543	1,249,185	\$24,110,471.00
OH	802,490	761,629	94,850	856,479	\$15,165,968.00
OK	675,168	306,306	63,359	369,665	\$8,826,965.00
OR	615,016	803,719	152,061	955,780	\$23,296,333.00
PA	1,032,277	1,333,443	114,985	1,448,428	\$24,831,229.00
RI	59,257	67,538	-16,597	84,135	\$803,310.00
SC	565,989	546,063	147,974	694,037	\$6,762,922.00
SD	222,550	152,274	74,631	226,905	\$5,917,617.00
TN	919,614	660,260	176,815	837,075	\$15,559,398.00
TX	1,675,278	1,829,575	123,008	1,952,583	\$55,118,632.00
UT	469,356	380,354	120,098	500,452	\$10,119,813.00
VA	513,922	600,348	72,230	672,578	\$30,391,350.00
VT	120,803	85,451	38,465	123,916	\$3,038,862.50
WA	651,060	2,062,321	197,646	2,259,967	\$32,298,588.00
WI	1,404,177	1,336,821	394,410	1,731,231	\$30,264,170.00
WV	261,031	568,374	135,501	703,875	\$5,973,206.00
WY	227,005	122,336	207,449	329,785	\$6,074,066.00
Total:	28,463,499	31,015,360	7,051,542	38,066,902	\$686,149,077.90